



**FOR RELEASE**  
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**Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Shows Little Change in March**  
**The Job Count Remains Relatively Flat**

Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training Director Adelita S. Orefice announced today that Rhode Island's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was 4.5 percent, up slightly from February's estimate of 4.4 percent. The number of employed Rhode Island residents climbed by 1,700 over the month, while the number of unemployed increased by 600 to 25,400 in March. A year ago, the unemployment rate was 5.4 percent, and the number of unemployed stood at 30,300. Nationally, the unemployment rate for March dipped to 5.2 percent, down from 5.4 percent in February and 5.7 percent a year ago. Rhode Island's unemployment rate has remained below the national average since August 2001.

	<u>Mar. 05</u>	<u>Feb. 05</u>	<u>Mar. 04</u>
Rhode Island	4.5%	4.4%	5.4%*
United States	5.2%	5.4%	5.7%

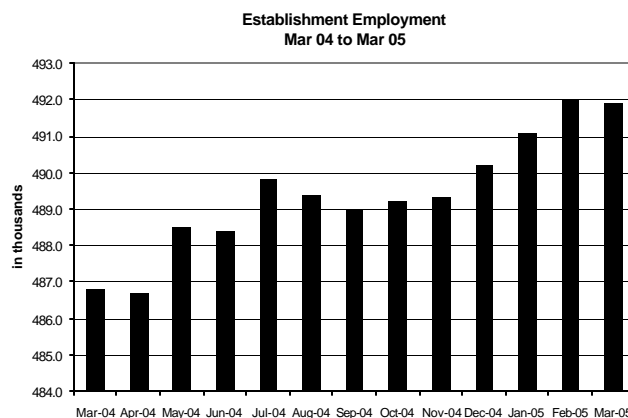
\* Revised

"Labor market conditions in Rhode Island showed little change in March as our unemployment rate inched up only a tenth of a percentage point," said DLT Director Orefice. "Although the job market stalled a bit in March, we are optimistic that hiring will pick up again over the next several months."

**Rhode Island Job Highlights**

Jobs at Rhode Island businesses were down 100 (-0.02%) last month, bringing the March job count to 491,900 (seasonally adjusted). Although job growth was reported in several sectors, including Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+400), Leisure & Hospitality (+400), and Educational & Health Services (+400), the job losses in Manufacturing (-500) and Construction (-100), along with declines in sectors that are not seasonally adjusted, led to an overall reduction in total nonfarm employment. Government employment remained unchanged over the month.

March's slight loss of 100 jobs marks the first monthly employment decline since September. Two Private sector industries - Manufacturing and Construction - experienced a one-month downturn. Three sectors reported continued growth, as Professional & Business Services, Educational & Health Services and Financial Activities each reported successive monthly job gains of six months, five months and four months, respectively. Trade, Transportation & Utilities, as well as Leisure & Hospitality, each reported a one-month job gain. Government employment remained stable in March following two months of job increases.



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Over the year, employment was up 5,100 (+1.0%) from the 486,800 jobs reported in March 2004. The largest gains were noted in Educational & Health Services (+2,600); Professional & Business Services (+2,500); Leisure & Hospitality (+2,200); and Financial Activities (+1,300). The largest private sector employment losses occurred in Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-1,700) and Manufacturing (-900). Government employment decreased by 100 jobs.

### Establishment Employment

	EMPLOYMENT IN THOUSANDS			NET CHANGE FROM	
	MAR 2005	FEB 2005	MAR 2004	FEB 2005	MAR 2004
TOTAL NONFARM	491.9	492.0	486.8	-100	5,100
Construction	21.0	21.1	20.9	-100	100
Manufacturing	56.0	56.5	56.9	-500	-900
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	79.0	78.6	80.7	400	-1,700
Financial Activities	35.3	35.2	34.0	100	1,300
Professional & Business Services	55.3	55.2	52.8	100	2,500
Educational & Health Services	95.0	94.6	92.4	400	2,600
Leisure & Hospitality	51.2	50.8	49.0	400	2,200
Government	65.7	65.7	65.8	0	-100

### Hours and Earnings

In March 2005, the \$12.99 average hourly wage earned by the Manufacturing sector's production workers remained even over the year, but reflected a monthly loss of one cent per hour. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 37.9 hours per week in March, unchanged over the month, but down 1.9 hours from last year.

*Note: Current month figures are preliminary; prior month and year are revised.*

*The unemployment figures are based largely on a survey of households in Rhode Island and measure the unemployment status of people who live in the state.*

*The employment figures in the "Rhode Island Job Highlights" section are derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state.*

**Rhode Island Labor Market Information is available on our web site at [www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi](http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi)**  
**The April labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 20, 2005.**

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#### ***Equal Opportunity Employer/Program***

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TDD (401) 462-8006